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Brief to the Alberta Commission on Educa  
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BRIEF PRESENTED TO

DR. W. H. WORTH

by

GARBUTT BUSINESS COLLEGE

HENDERSON COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

HOLLINGSHEAD BUSINESS COLLEGE

MODERN COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

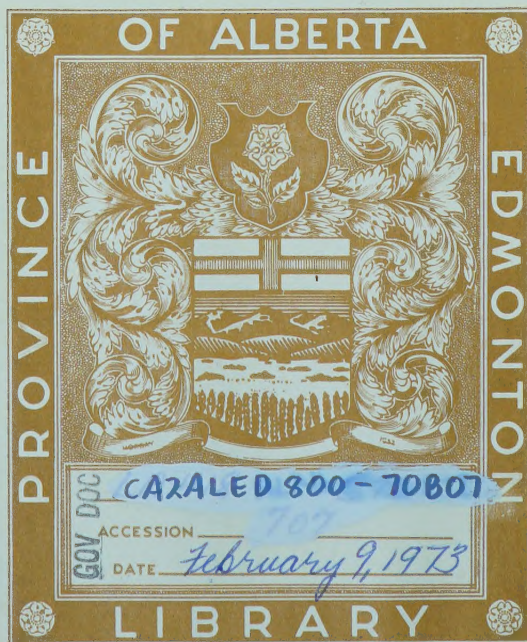
REEVES BUSINESS COLLEGES

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B R I E F

presented to

DR. WALTER H. WORTH  
COMMISSION ON EDUCATIONAL PLANNING  
SUITE 400  
1101 - 142 STREET  
EDMONTON, ALBERTA

by

GARBUTT BUSINESS COLLEGE (MEDICINE HAT)  
HENDERSON COLLEGE OF BUSINESS (CALGARY, EDMONTON, LETHBRIDGE)  
HOLLINGSHEAD BUSINESS COLLEGE LTD. (CALGARY)  
MODERN COLLEGE OF BUSINESS LTD. (CALGARY)  
REEVES BUSINESS COLLEGES LTD. (LLOYDMINSTER, RED DEER)





March 1, 1971

BRIEF

presented to


DR. WALTER H. WORTH  
COMMISSION ON EDUCATIONAL PLANNING  
SUITE 400  
1101 - 142 STREET  
EDMONTON, ALBERTA

by

THE (PRIVATE COMMERCIAL COLLEGES OF ALBERTA

On behalf of the Private Commercial Colleges of Alberta, may we respectfully bring the following matters to your attention with respect to the service that is being rendered by the proprietary business schools in the Province of Alberta. When setting up institutions such as Community or Junior Colleges, very often little consideration is given as to whether or not the services to be provided duplicate existing services.

In a 1966 American Council on Education study, 23 per cent of the entering Junior College freshmen chose business as their major. There is reason to believe that about the same percentage of young people in Alberta may also be choosing business if they attend Community or Junior Colleges. At the present time, there are approximately 1,000 students registered in the private business schools in Alberta. If the taxpayers had to provide accommodation and facilities for that number of students, a considerable plant would have to be built, equipped and staffed, and at the per-pupil-cost rates in the post-High School institutions, the cost to the taxpayer would impose an even greater burden than he is already bearing. The per-pupil costs in the public institutions for a 9-month



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commercial program at the present time range from \$800 up to \$1680. The tuition rate in the private schools for the same amount of time, and for comparable programs, range from \$550 to \$700. In other words, the costs in the public institutions run at least 50% higher, and up to more than 100% higher than in the private institutions.

Setting up business programs in Community Colleges by following a policy of duplication is bound to result in large and unnecessary increases in costs to the taxpayer. The philosophy that all education is or should be "free", or that knowledge can be gained only in a public or "free" institution, does not bear very close scrutiny, and is a fantasy that most taxpayers can no longer afford to indulge in. Education is not free in the economic sense, and many students find that it does not allow much freedom when it comes to a matter of choice of schools, instructors, or subject matter.

#### HISTORY OF THE PRIVATE BUSINESS COLLEGES:

The private business colleges in the Province of Alberta have a history going back over 60 years. In the beginning, public schools were not offering business subjects, or business training of any kind, and business colleges, generally, came into existence because of the obvious need for this type of training or education. Actually, business education is a combination of further education in the two great areas of communication--English and Mathematics--instruction, or education if you wish, in specialized subjects such as Accounting, and training in skill subjects, such as shorthand and typewriting, and the operation and use of business machines.





The private business colleges have developed and flourished because of, and according to, the needs of their communities. Changes and development have occurred over the years, according to the changing demands and needs of the communities which they serve. One of the greatest strengths of the private business college is its flexibility. This is one of the main reasons there is not necessarily standardization in this field. In a country as large as Canada, with so largely diversified an economy, it would be passing strange if exactly the same type of school, or program, met all the needs in all the different regions. A great many schools are alike; many schools are distinctive; some are unique. And it is in this distinctiveness, or uniqueness, that the value and strength of the private business college lies.

The success of the private business college is in direct ratio to the service it renders to the community it serves. The success of the college depends almost entirely on the success of its graduates--their success depends on how well they meet the requirements of employers. In other words, if employers are not satisfied with the qualifications of graduates, they do not continue to hire them--and when employers do not hire graduates, or express dissatisfaction with their services, then students do not continue to go to the institution UNLESS--and we want to emphasize this--there is misrepresentation in advertising, or misrepresentation of any other nature. But in Alberta, this is an area that is covered and controlled, OR SHOULD BE, by the Trade Schools Act.

The private business colleges have never asked for, nor received, any kind of government assistance in the way of grants. The private business





colleges are self-supporting; they pay full taxes and licences; they provide employment for local people; and they have, and are, meeting a need in the community.

#### RECOGNITION OF PROPRIETARY COLLEGES

It is almost dogma with many academics that education and profit motivation do not mix. Normally, academic prejudice against the free enterprise system runs high. Academic prejudice against vocational education also runs high. This kind of thinking has resulted in the attitude of many educators to business education--the using of commercial departments in the high schools as "dumping grounds" for "problem" students, with the consequent downgrading in the status of business education in the minds of students and parents alike. Everyone is concerned today with the problems of youth in regard to unemployment. Office work is one of the fastest growing fields of employment, yet the young people coming out of our high schools, in most cases, are completely ignorant of the opportunities available in the business world, or have acquired an entirely wrong idea of the skills and qualifications required. Consequently most of them have wrong, poor, or biased attitudes. Those of us who are active in the business world know that business does not want and cannot use people of low mental capacity or of limited educational background. Yet too frequently these are the people who are guided into the field because educators themselves are not aware of the opportunities and challenges in the business world. In the province of Alberta, the private colleges are controlled through the Department of Labour----- and we have a Trade Schools Act on the books which can, and should, have





sufficient control to prevent misrepresentation in advertising or misrepresentation of any kind. But the fact that private business colleges are run both as businesses and as educational institutions is apparently considered as a black mark against them. It is not that they are discriminated against, it is simply that they are seldom considered at all as a part of the total educational picture. One concession that has been made in recent years is in the matter of Canada Student Loans and Alberta Student Loans, in that some schools have been designated as approved institutions. However, as is made clear to us, the loans are made to students, not to institutions. But in this case, the students are fortunate in that they do have some freedom of choice.

The fact that private business colleges are run both as businesses and as educational institutions is an advantage. For one thing, how can you teach business successfully if you are not operating successfully as a business institution? If we were failures in business we might be more favorably looked upon by educators - but I doubt that we would attract many students. If we don't follow sound educational principles, we don't continue to attract students; if we don't follow sound business principles, we don't stay around long enough to attract anybody. The business colleges, like any other business, must follow the basic principles of cost-effectiveness and accountability for results. Sound business principles and sound educational principles are not incompatible. Business is just as interested in scholastic attainments and achievements, in integrity, in character, and in good citizenship as are the professional educators. The profit motive does not necessarily threaten the integrity of the proprietary





institution. We would like to quote, in part, from a judgment recently handed down in the United States: "Educational excellence is determined, not by the method of financing, but by the quality of the program. (The defendant's) position, moreover, ignores the possibility that the profit motive might result in a more efficient use of resources, producing a better product at a lower price. Additionally, an efficiently operated proprietary institution could furnish an excellent educational curriculum, whereas a badly managed non-profit corporation might fail. Defendant's assumption that the profit motive is inconsistent with quality is not supported by the evidence and is unwarranted. There is nothing inherently evil in making a profit, and nothing commendable about operating at a loss."

Graduates of Community Colleges and other public institutions, as well as graduates of the private business colleges, will be living and working in a free enterprise system. If, in our educational system, the philosophy that the profit system is inherently evil is the basis for setting up institutions and programs, how then are the students coming out of that atmosphere expected to live and to work happily and successfully in that same profit system? Perhaps the fact that many students often see little relevance between what they are learning and what they will be doing is one of the reasons why the schools are being bedeviled by dropouts and violent protesters.

#### ADVANTAGES OF THE PROPRIETARY BUSINESS COLLEGES

In addition to the financial aspects, and the savings to taxpayers in that area, there are other advantages offered by the private business colleges.





1. Year round programs, - with a choice of entrance dates.

2. Freedom of Choice

Freedom to choose between a public or a private institution - and to choose between various types of private institutions. Freedom to choose courses and subjects that meet individual preferences and needs.

3. Flexibility

As members of the business community, the private schools are in constant and direct communication with employers, and therefore sensitive to changing conditions. They have the ability to adjust quickly to changes.

4. Practical balance between general and specific education.

5. Programs that provide practical guidance services to all students.

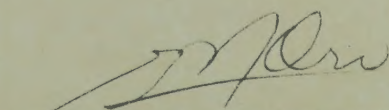
6. Cost-Effectiveness and Accountability

Administrators who are responsible for setting up programs have to preserve a proper balance between costs and effectiveness of results - and are directly accountable to students, parents and employers.

It is respectfully suggested that if additional educational facilities are to be set up, that present community resources not be overlooked or duplicated, at enormous expense to the taxpayer. As proprietors of business schools, we also bear heavy burdens as taxpayers, and it is as taxpayers, as well as members of the business community, that we wish to place our opinions on record.

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RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



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G. N. ORR, PRESIDENT  
THE PRIVATE COMMERCIAL COLLEGES OF ALBERTA







DOCTOR WALTER H. WORTH

COMMISSION ON EDUCATIONAL

PLANNING

Suite 400, 1101 - 142 Street  
EDMONTON, Alberta

(Brief)